

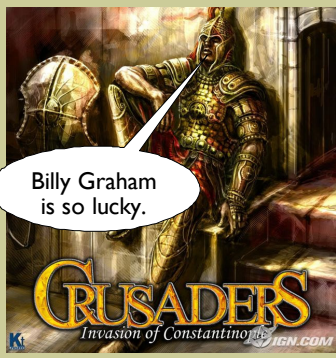
Volume 2, Issue 2

January 23, 2010

What progress!

Super-religious man-killers are all cleaned up

In the old days, the Crusaders said, "Become Christians, or be dissected by the sword!" How the Crusades have progressed over the years. The modern Crusader arrives upon the "battlefield" (that is, the crusade) in coat, tie, and chauffeured automobile. The means of dispatching infidels is also to be desired over the old method: Inform the God-rejecters of their fate (eternal torment), then walk away. Two vast improvements here: The condemned die a slower death (fear and guilt take years to kill a person) and the Crusader keeps the blood off his tie. ■



Fact!

There are 91,000,000 people in the U.S. who call themselves, "Evangelical Christians." Imagine: 91 million people who would **DAMN YOUR UNBELIEVING CHILDREN TO AN ETERNITY OF TORMENT!**

Martin Zender's Clanging Gong News

"If I know all mysteries and all knowledge, but have no love, I am a clanging gong" --1 Cor. 13:1-2



Two out of three isn't bad.

Jesus Christ could not be a Christian



Being a lover of truth, Jesus Christ could not be a Christian. He could not sit in the modern assembly and tolerate the lies.

For instance, He suffered and died to save mankind, yet they're teaching here that His work wasn't good enough. How could it have been good enough when most people end up being tormented for eternity in His sight?

Jesus Christ came to destroy the works of the devil (1 Jn. 3:8), yet they teach here that the devil will one day possess a sovereign kingdom far away from His, taking most of humanity (those for whom Christ died) with him.

His Father has a sovereign will (Eph. 1:11), yet they're teaching here that every man, woman, and child has the same thing; 6 billion little Gods (yes, "Gods" with a capital "G") who can do whatever they want. Worse, the human will is stronger than the divine will, and thus able to thwart it.

His Father "wills that all mankind be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim. 2:6), and yet a man who wills not to be saved

overrides the will of God and is therefore never saved. God wills for the man's salvation, but cannot enact it. The man wills to be damned, and accomplishes his desire. Conclusion: a man's will is stronger than God's. Do you really think that Jesus Christ would sit through this kind of teaching?

In His death and resurrection, Jesus freed us from sin. The institution assumes this to mean: "You must behave yourself or else!" Jesus Himself rolls His eyes. Being freed from sin has nothing to do with how much or how little a person sins, but with freedom from the condemnation and guilt of sin. It means that our failures no longer condemn and depress us. How could Jesus Himself keep listening to a message that so distorts His work?

Jesus Christ "is taking away the sin of the world" (Jn. 1:29), yet they're teaching here that sin will yet keep billions from knowing Him. Salvation is by grace (*He* knows that), yet they're teaching here that salvation requires a person to at least believe in the grace. If one does not, then one is not saved. So where is the grace?

How could Jesus Himself keep listening to a message that so distorts the truth?

The Ten Commandments came to cause sin to increase (Rom. 5:20), yet the institution still teaches this law as a viable, workable means to godliness. They themselves cannot do it, and yet they still expect others to. Are hypocrites still running the temples? You tell me. Jesus freed people from this law (Rom. 8:2), so don't be surprised when He walks from the buildings that still promote it.

Could *you* listen to so many misguided hypocrites habitually making hash of *your* work? Demeaning *your* father? Giving the victory to *your* enemy?

No? Then get the heck out. ■

Special feature Rant PLUS

This new house can be yours; just ask



Joel Osteen

A Story by Martin Zender



One day during the first year of their relatively happy life together, Mack and Julia strolled through a park toward a different part of their neighborhood. This was in the month of May.

There they were, strolling away, when what to their wondering eyes should appear, but a big house nearly built, but yet unoccupied. The doors were open so Julia said, "Let's go in!"

By the time they walked out of the new house, Julia was full of glowing adjectives for it: "pretty," "beautiful," "fabulous," "spacious," "new," "glowing." None of these adjectives could ever have applied to *her* house. No, her house could only have been particularized by the most despicable adjective available to man-made domiciles: *one-story ranch*.

Mack and Julia lived in a neighborhood of wonderful people who would have done anything for them, and vice-versa. Better neighbors were ne'er to be found. The bad news was that all the houses in their neighborhood were one-story ranch-style. Not even Jesus would stoop to be born in such a domicile! Joseph and Mary were offered a one-story ranch in Bethlehem, but Mary said, "Are you kidding me?" Joseph shrugged and followed his pregnant wife to the stable. What else could he do? His wife was so much more spiritual than he.

Though unfinished, the new house thrilled Julia. But Mack was unprepared for the glow that illumined his wife's face as the couple returned to the street.

Mack had never seen the glow of a prophetess, but this had to be it. He had read many Biblical accounts of holy seers, and his wife—at this most holy of moments—fit all the descriptions and drawings. These great men and women of God prophesied over kings and kingdoms, and then glowed a godly glow. The glow would redden the cheeks of anyone speaking into existence God's perfect will.

Mack shifted painfully in his fallen nature. "What have you been reading, Julia?"

For Julia, the setting sun made her radiate spiritual energy. She looked away from Mack and spoke into the setting sun. She said: "Mack, one day, you and I are going to live in a beautiful house just like that one!"

Mack listened for the voice of angels, but all he heard was a dog barking.

"How do you know?" he asked.

Julia never took her eyes from the sunset. "I just do," she said. "Our house is extremely old."

"No, honey," said Mack. "The Inca houses in Peru are extremely old."

"None of our doors close properly," said Julia.

"That's true," said Mack, "but they close *eventually*."

"Shut up, Mack!" snapped his wife. "You have no faith!"

Mack shifted painfully in his fallen nature. "What have you been reading, Julia? Houses like this one are out of our price range. I don't see how we'll ever afford one."

"Just give me thirty minutes," said Julia. She turned from the sunset and faced the house. "All I need is thirty minutes."

"You're going to raise money for a new house in thirty minutes?" asked Mack.

"No, Pontius Pilate! I'm going to stare at this house for thirty minutes and burn it onto my corneas. You can go home if you want to. I have to stare at the house so that I can envision, so that I can speak, so that I can be filled with joy, so that I can claim victory. Make yourself some supper; there's leftover ham in the refrigerator."

(Continued on pg. 3)

While Mack's wife conducted her spiritual experiments, Mack returned home and looked up Bible information on prophets and prophetesses.

In the coming weeks, Mack's cute little prophetess walked around their one-story house for a month speaking "words of faith" concerning a new house. Even after all his study, Mack did not know what words of faith were. Julia tried to explain to him that words of faith were sayings that were going to happen no matter what. All you needed was faith, said Julia. "But what about facts?" asked her husband. Julia said one didn't need facts. All one needed was faith—and words, of course—spoken out loud. Facts only hindered faith, said Julia. In fact, facts slapped faith in the face, and vice-versa.



You, the reader, might say, "I want a new house." *Buzzzzzz*. That's completely wrong, and you have certainly *not* spoken a word of faith. A word of faith is precisely as Julia described to Mack: "I'm *going* to have a new house."

Let's say that a man turns on his television and sees that his favorite football team is losing to another team by fifty-two points late in the fourth quarter. Does the man wish his team to win? Then he has no faith! He must say, out loud, "My team *will* win." Fifty-two points is nothing to God. Cannot He Who ringed Saturn and spotted Jupiter pull off a couple outside kicks? Seven outside kicks? In less than sixty seconds?

Let's say the man in our example speaks the word of faith and his team still loses. Shame on God? No! That's blasphemy. The truth is, shame on the man. God is perfect, but the man's faith apparently leaks like Mack's one-story ranch roof.

What can cause such a faith leak? Any number of things: the wrong kinds of fats, poor sleeping habits, high fructose corn syrup, dark sexual fantasies—to name four. But it is never too late to change. And so if the man who would exercise perfect faith begins grinding flaxseed, going to bed earlier, denouncing sugar, and thinking only pure thoughts, he has a fighting chance. Or, perhaps he needs to speak words of faith earlier in the game.

"Do you actually believe we're going to buy a new house?" Mack asked Julia later that day in the kitchen.

"Not only that," said Julia, "but it's going to be a large, two-story home, with high ceilings and oversized windows that will yield an appealing view of the backyard, which I notice is now filled with blossoming apple trees."

Mack tried to look where his wife was staring, to see how beautiful the apple blossoms were. But all he saw was a row of kitchen utensils in descending sizes.

"I feel it deep inside," Julia said.

"Inside the spatulas?" Mack asked.

"No, Judas Iscariot! I'm talking about the house. I'm talking about the yard—and the apple blossoms. Everything looks elegant, can't you see that? This is another word of faith I've been hearing from God lately: 'elegant.'"

"I know," Mack said. "I can tell you're filled with elegant faith. But—if I may ask—are you sure this is the voice of God you're hearing? Do you think it's possible that you're picking up stray FM signals through your fillings?"

"Get behind me, Satan!" said a righteously indignant Julia.

"I sure will!" said Mack, more than happy to comply. (Mack's wife was beautiful of buttock, you see, and she always wore tight jeans.)

Mack, an insurance salesman, wrote many new policies that year, which he was planning on doing anyway. Things worked out, and he and Julia bought the new house. It was not the one they saw that terrible day in May, but an even bigger one in another neighborhood seven blocks from the realm of their spiritual babyhood.

But alas: misery followed. All of Mack and Julia's neighbors were mean and thoughtless. How different from the old clan of nice people! Mack tried to get Julia to speak a word of faith against Mrs. Goldstein. "Mrs. Goldstein's dog *will* stop defecating in our front yard every afternoon," said Julia, over and over again. Julia believed it, saw it, and spoke it. Even Mack began believing, seeing, and speaking it. He became as full of elegant joy as his wife, and soon he and she both claimed continual victory over the many smoking piles of dog crap. What happened? More dog crap. The words of faith failed spectacularly. Mack looked at the doo-doo piles, then at his beautifully-crafted wife. But alas: the glow of the prophetess had vanished from Julia's face. His wife was still quite pretty, but no more prophetess.

Julia later slumped back in her favorite piece of new furniture and stared out her beveled glass picture window at their apple orchard. Mack tried to comfort her. "Is there some dark sexual fantasy you need to confess?" he asked.

Mack, who had been trying to reform himself by grinding flaxseed, going to bed earlier, denouncing sugar, and thinking only pure thoughts, once again began eating processed corn flakes, staying up late, drinking pancake syrup, and looking at women's underwear ads. Life was good again.

Mack and Julia returned to their old neighborhood and eventually bought another one-story ranch not far from their old one. The moral of the story? Mack and Julia are once again happy. There is some kind of foundation problem with the new house, however, and the doors don't shut properly. But they do shut *eventually*, and that is all anyone living during an eon such as this one should hope for. ■